

*Recreation is the constructive use of leisure. . .
 Recreation is fun. . .
 Recreation is a refreshing experience. . .
 Recreation is a means for self-expression. . .
 Recreation is a state of mind. . .
 Recreation elevates the quality of living. . .
 Recreation is activity. . .
 Recreation offers an outlet for creative energy. . .
 Recreation is all of those things which an individual chooses to do in his leisure because of the personal enjoyment and satisfaction he derives.*

INTRODUCTION

The ministry of correctional services is responsible for all adults (16 years of age and over) on probation, awaiting trial, or serving a sentence of up to two years less a day. The 51 institutions operated by the ministry include jails and detention centres, correctional centres, treatment units, and forestry camps.

A wide variety of programs have been developed in the areas of work, academic and vocational training, recreation, health care, social and psychological assistance to provide for the needs of those persons in the care of the ministry. The objectives of the programs are to provide the individual with opportunities for growth and development which can, in turn, lead to a change in lifestyle.



Learning how to make constructive use of leisure time, how to participate with others in group activities and how to develop one's creative skills are areas of particular concern to recreation staff.

RECREATION WITHIN THE MINISTRY

All detention centres and correctional centres have full-time recreation staff whose duties include the development and implementation of recreation programs. The staff consists of a recreation director and one or more recreation officers, depending on the size of the institution.

In thinking about a career in recreation within the ministry, it is important to understand: first, the types of recreation positions which are available; second, the educational opportunities for recreation; and third, the way in which one may become involved in recreation service.

Because of the relatively small size of the recreation staff in a given institution, the ministry usually seeks staff with an interest in recreation in general, rather than specialists in the various component areas of a recreation program. The recreation officer works mainly as a face-to-face leader or supervisor of programs in the physical, cultural and social areas. The recreation director in a small institution takes direct responsibility for some programs, but is also responsible for the total program planning and the supervision of staff and volunteers. The recreation director in larger institutions spends more time in administrative work rather than working directly with the client.

Candidates for a recreation post in the institutions generally have a diploma from a community college in recreation leadership or

a degree in recreation, kinesiology, or other related fields from a university of recognized standing. In addition, most applicants usually have some background in recreation and many have experience in the corrections field.

There are a number of ways in which students in the recreation field can become involved in correctional recreation prior to their graduation. The Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services accepts college and university students on field placement, and students can get further experience by working as volunteers or through summer employment at various institutions. The ministry also accepts students from co-operative programs and on internships.

Gaining experience in this way allows the student to decide whether or not institutional work should be considered as a career possibility and gives the ministry the opportunity to evaluate the student's potential for work in this specialized area.

RECREATION EDUCATION

Education for recreation and leisure has greatly expanded within the last few years and is an important area of consideration. In Ontario, there are two major recreation education programs:

1. The two-year diploma program at colleges of applied arts and technology.
2. University programs:
 - a) Four-year undergraduate degree programs offered at the University of Waterloo as a co-operative program and at the University of Ottawa.

- b) Graduate programs offered at the University of Waterloo.

Information on these programs is available at most community colleges and universities.



RECRUITMENT

Individuals are recruited for recreation positions mainly from among qualified staff already employed by the ministry and interested in correctional recreation. Qualified and interested individuals should consider working as a correctional officer, or in other areas of the institution, to gain experience and put themselves in touch with the competitions for recreation officer positions.

Promotion to recreation director is by way of internal competition and is advertised to the general public only if a suitable candidate cannot be found within the government.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

The recreation program offers an opportunity for inmates to develop skills and resources for the constructive use of leisure time.

Physical activities such as sports are offered on a regular basis in addition to fitness programs which help to maintain acceptable levels of physical fitness and

promote the development of a healthy lifestyle. Cultural programs provide inmates with exposure to various art forms which act as a medium for self-expression. Arts and crafts, drama and music are just a few of the opportunities for involvement in the arts. Social interaction, personal development, and an appreciation of appropriate behavior is encouraged by a variety of social activities.

Native inmates develop an appreciation of their background through specialized programs which focus on their rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

Leisure education is considered to be an important part of the recreation program. Many institutions offer formal courses in which the inmate has the opportunity to look at the values of leisure time and the benefits of using it effectively. The recreation program also offers an opportunity for involvement in outdoor education.

VOLUNTEERS

A great many citizen volunteers are currently involved in institution and community programs. Many of these people work as instructors and leaders in various recreation activities.

Each institution recruits and trains volunteers to meet its particular program needs.



Ontario

Ministry of
Correctional
Services

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Recreation in Corrections

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